

CBM shortlisted for Best Practice Skills Development Award

We're delighted to announce that the CBM has been shortlisted for a Trade Association Forum (TAF) Best Practice Award for our achievements in skills development.

TAF runs these prestigious awards to recognise excellence in how trade associations support members and the wider industry. The Skills Development Award showcases organisations that have spearheaded the skills agenda and made a demonstrable impact helping overcome training challenges.

We've been shortlisted for our 2-year project working with partners including the Black Country LEP, Skills Factory and InComm to define the metalforming industry's skills needs and develop bespoke training to address them.

The project's achievements include

- **Unique training centre for toolmakers**

Wide-ranging stakeholder discussions revealed a particular shortage of toolmakers, with the metalforming industry lacking training in this area.

We applied for and won a share of a £7.5 million grant to address skills gaps. This funding has enabled us to become a partner in the Elite Centre for Manufacturing Skills project and set up a bespoke training centre.

The centre is unique in the industry. It replicates a production press shop complete with power press cells and industry equipment, providing trainees with valuable hands-on experience.

- **Toolmaking-specific apprenticeship curriculum**

Having created the facilities, we also recognised that apprentices need an appropriate curriculum to develop their skills and meet employer needs.

We therefore joined the automotive trailblazer group to help shape the now-approved L3 toolmaking standard, which is currently being delivered to industry.

- **Ongoing toolmaker training and development**

Metalformers also need to show trainees that there are opportunities for career progression, so we set up our own trailblazer group to develop an L6 degree standard for a tool design engineer. This will enable companies to use their apprenticeship levy to offer funded degrees.

The standard is now approved, and work is being done to develop the end point assessment.

- **Forging is benefiting, too**

TAF have also recognised our efforts developing training for the forging sector. Forging has historically been seen as something of a black art and therefore lacked dedicated training material.

For the first time, employers will now be able to take advantage of a structured programme. We've created a series of modules covering the entire forging process, and 6 of 14 modules are now complete.

Stephen Morley, President of the CBM said:

“To nurture and retain talent, companies need to access to dedicated training, but not enough was happening to address metalformers’ specific needs. Our efforts over the past 2 years have made an important contribution – providing a structured way to develop essential skills. We’ve coordinated with stakeholders, secured funding and developed facilities and programmes that will have long-term benefits for the industry. We’re delighted that the Trade Association Forum has recognised our efforts by shortlisting us for its Skills Development Best Practice Award. Thanks to all the members and partners that have made this achievement possible.”